

Holy Archdiocese of Australia approves of commemorative events for bicentenary of the beginning of the Greek Revolution



Church hierarchs on the council of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia met on Tuesday in Sydney, under the chairmanship of His Eminence, Archbishop Makarios, to deal with several issues on the agenda.

After extensive deliberations, members of the Archdiocese Council unanimously approved of a series of matters, with a subsequent announcement, noting, among others, that "...a national committee was established by His Eminence to celebrate the Bicentenary of the beginning of the Greek Revolution. The national committee is working with great fervor and a rich program of events for the whole country, which will soon be announced. The Council approved the proposal of the committee and that of the Archbishop for the minting of a commemorative coin and the printing of an anniversary stamp."

The announcement from the Archdiocesan Council of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia reads:

The Archdiocesan Council of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia met today, 29th September, 2020, in Sydney, under the Presidency of His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia and dealt with the issues on the agenda. After extensive deliberations, the members of the Archdiocesan Council unanimously resolved upon and hereby announce the following:

1. Firstly, we praise the Triune God and express our gratitude and our deepest respect to His All Holiness our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and the Mother Church for the election of our new Archbishop of Australia, His Eminence Archbishop Makarios. Moreover, we were moved to learn that His Eminence has been invited to be a member of the Holy and Sacred Synod, a first in the history of our local Church.
2. It is a fact that within a year, our new Shepherd, despite the adversities of the devastating fires and the COVID-19 pandemic, has proven to be a dynamic presence throughout the entire continent. We are aligned with, and fully embrace, the vision of our new Archbishop, which is based on unity and love, so that, together, we may make the Archdiocese of Australia a more formidable force in Australian society. Within this spirit of unity and reconciliation, we thank our Ecumenical Patriarchate for the restoration of His Grace Bishop Paul of Christianoupolis and the priests, Fr George Athanasiadis and Fr Christodoulos Vassilaris, who are now members of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Australia.
3. We also express our deep gratitude to our Ecumenical Patriarch and our Archbishop for the election of our new and worthy Bishop Emilianos of Meloa, Bishop Elpidios of Kyaneon and Bishop Silouan of Sinope, who have already assumed executive positions within the Holy Archdiocese, and we consider the creation by His Eminence of separate Archdiocesan Districts in Perth, Northcote and Canberra to be beneficial in effectively dealing with the administrative and spiritual issues in those areas.
4. We gladly accept our Archbishop's proposal for the regular convening of the Archdiocesan Council, as defined by the Special Regulations of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia. It should be noted that today's convening of the Archdiocesan Council was set during the meeting of the Bishops of our Archdiocese on 7th August of this year; the previous sittings of the Archdiocesan Council had met were in 2015 and in 2012.

5. The Clergy-Laity Conference of the Holy Archdiocese of Australia was due to take place next January. However, due to the restrictions of the pandemic, the local authorities have advised us to postpone its convocation. We therefore decided to reschedule the commencement of the event to 30th May 2021, as long as we are free from the restrictions of the pandemic. The theme of the Clergy-Laity Conference will be *"For Faith and Nation"*. Also, the National Youth Conference will begin on 24th September 2021. For these two major events, the Archdiocesan Council will convene again soon and relevant details will be announced in due course.
6. In a spirit of unity, a National Committee was established by His Eminence to celebrate the Bicentenary of the beginning of the Greek Revolution (1821-2021). The National Committee is working with great fervour and a rich program of events for the whole country will soon be announced. The Archdiocesan Council approved the proposal of the Committee and that of the Archbishop for the minting of a commemorative coin and the printing of an anniversary stamp.
7. With deep pain, we experienced the consequences of the pandemic in Victoria and especially at our St Basil's Aged Care facility in Melbourne. We all share in the pain of the relatives of the victims. We are praying for the repose of their souls, while proceeding with a restructuring of the organisation. At the same time, we wish the new Chairman of the Board of Directors of St Basil's in Melbourne, the Very Reverend Archimandrite Father Evmenios Vasilopoulos, every success, as well as to the new CEO of St Basil's in NSW and the ACT, Mr Spiro Stavis.
8. The Archdiocesan Council accepted responsibility for not providing an official residence for the incumbent Archbishop, as there is for each Hierarch all over the world. The small lodgings adjoining the Archbishop's office are completely unsuitable as a permanent residence of any person, let alone for the leader of our Church in Australia. The purchase of an apartment by the Consolidated Trust, with all due process, provides an asset of the Archdiocese, and not His Eminence. To this day, the Archbishop continues to reside in the Archdiocese. It is our respectful decision and our request that the Archbishop should occupy the apartment until the completion of the renovations of the Archdiocese, in which a residence for the serving Archbishop will be incorporated.
9. Finally, with great disappointment we note the continuing hostile conduct of Mr Nicholas Kalliouris and Mrs Vasso Morali, former journalist, and both residents of Greece, as well as other non-institutional and para-ecclesiastical elements against the Archdiocese, St Basil's Aged Care and our Archbishop personally. We agree with the position of His Eminence Metropolitan Seraphim of Sevasteia that their publications are "blasphemous lies." With abhorrence, we condemn what they have written and inform the faithful that they have all been referred to the justice system. We assure everyone that His Eminence

Archbishop Makarios, as well as the Archdiocese with its benevolent institutions, will not be blackmailed or influenced in their decisions by their malicious conduct and their defamatory publications.